

Rurouni Kenshin



SHONEN JUMP MANGA

Story & Art by

Nobuhiro Watsuki

volume

5



QUIT
WHINING
AND KEEP
WORKING!!

I WOULD'VE
SWORN THEY'D
YANK THE
SERIES AFTER
10 WEEKS...

SURRAA

和月伸宏

NOBUHIRO WATSUKI



A YEAR ALREADY... WHO'D HAVE THUNK IT?!

ALREADY IT'S BEEN A YEAR SINCE "RUROKEN" STARTED INITIAL PUBLICATION IN JAPAN. JUST LIKE THE SCENE TO THE LEFT ILLUSTRATES, TO ME THAT'S A REAL SHOCKER! IT'S A TOUGH THING, HAVING A DREAM REALIZED...BUT KEEPING THAT DREAM GOING AFTER IT HAS BEEN, IS EVEN TOUGHER—AND THAT'S WHAT THIS YEAR'S TAUGHT ME. IT'S BEEN A CASE OF DEALING WITH CHRONIC FATIGUE AND A LACK OF MAN-POWER, BUT I'M GONNA HANG IN THERE AND DO WHAT I CAN.

Rurouni Kenshin, which has found fans not only in Japan but around the world, first made its appearance in 1992, as an original short story in *Weekly Shonen Jump Special*. Later rewritten and published as a regular, continuing *Jump* series in 1994, **RUROUNI KENSHIN** ended serialization in 1999 but continued in popularity, as evidenced by the 2000 publication of *Yahiko no Sakabatô* ("Yahiko's Reversed-Edge Sword") in *Weekly Shonen Jump*. His most current work, *Busô Renkin* ("Armored Alchemist"), began publication this June, also in *Jump*.

RUROUNI KENSHIN
VOL 5: THE STATE OF MEIJI SWORDMANSHIP
The SHONEN JUMP Graphic Novel Edition

STORY AND ART BY
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PARENTAL ADVISORY

Rurouni Kenshin is rated "T+" for older teens. It contains violence.

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SHONEN JUMP GRAPHIC NOVEL

Rurouni Kenshin™

MELJI SWORDSMAN ROMANTIC STORY
Vol. 5: THE STATE OF MELJI SWORDSMANSHIP

STORY AND ART BY
NOBUHIRO
WATSUKI



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Act 31

Bonus Story:

Yahiko's Battle (1)



YAHIKO!!!

WMMING!

YAHIKO!
YAHIKO!!!







YOU
BRAT
!!!!

KABLAN

WHAT
IS YOUR
PROBLEM
?!

GIMME
A
BREAK!

RRRG!

THAT'S
NOT
"JUST" A
WALK.

A WALK
WHEN YOU
SHOULD BE
TRAINING

JUST
A
WALK.

SO
WHERE
WERE
YOU,
YAHIKO
?

HEH

RK...

SKRK



HMM...

DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
IT.

ZIP

HEY, I'M
STILL MAKING
4 OUT OF 6
PRACTICES
IN A WEEK.

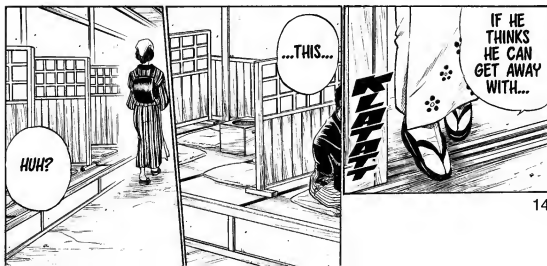


ORO
...



A FEW
DAYS
LATER...







KAORU-
CHAN,
LONG
TIME NO
SEE!



TAE-
SAN!

OH!!

THAT'S
FUNNY...
I'M SURE HE
CAME IN
HERE...



Long time no see, indeed. Watsuki here. The 3rd volume of the CD books has been decided on the "Jin-e" episodes. At the time I'm writing this, it's just been decided, so I have no information about the script or the voice-actors. The script probably will be based pretty closely on the original story, with a little massaging to increase the appearances of Sanosuke and Yahiko. For the voice-actor, I'd like someone with a mature but cool voice. In my mind, Jin-e is a mad hero, so I'd like to avoid an actor with a high voice...basically, though, I'm leaving it to Jump Media Mix and Fukui-san. I didn't expect it to get so far...and it's all because of you readers. Recently, I've been given a really tough schedule, and honestly speaking, I've had some times when I've wanted to quit writing. But it's too early to "give up" on manga. As long as there are people who read, support, and anticipate, I will have to write, and will want to write. I'm going to keep working on "Rurouni," keeping my original goals in mind.

Watsuki







MAYBE
THAT'S
YOUR
ANSWER.

"THAT
...?"



BUT WHY
IS HE
DOING
THIS...?



WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?
HURRY
UP!

I-I'M
SORRY...

YAHIKO-
CHAN.



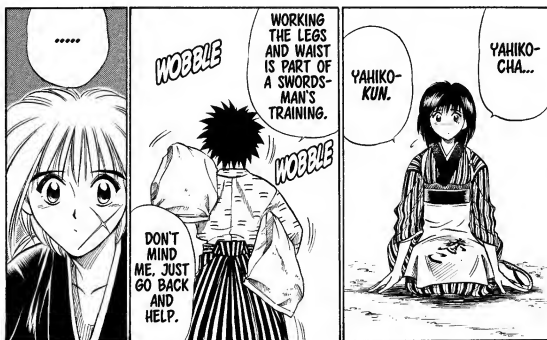
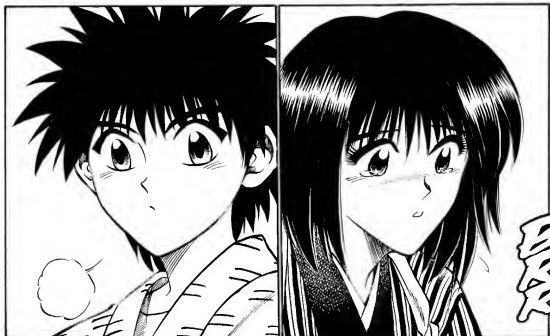
I TOLD
YOU NOT
TO CALL ME
"CHAN!!"

SORRY!
SORRY!

WRRK

OH,
TSUBAME?

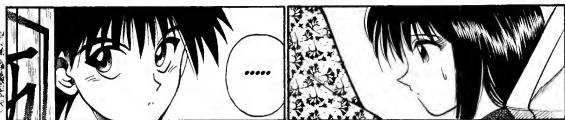
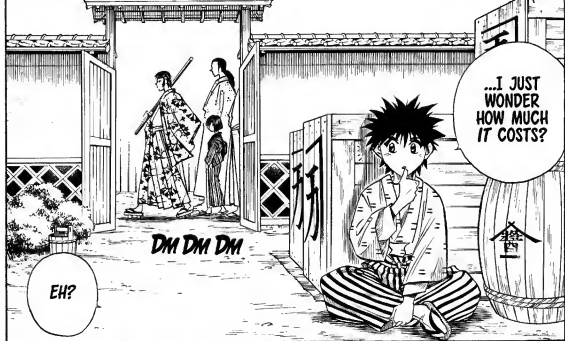
I DON'T
THINK SO.
SHE CAME
TO US
AFTER
YAHIKO
DID.

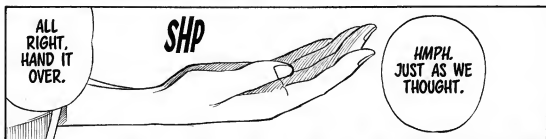












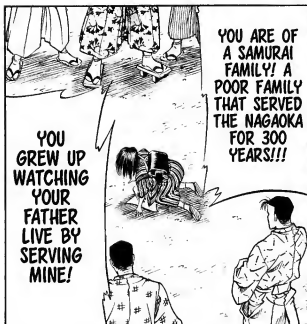


HUH...

BURGLARY
WILL SHAME
THE NAME
OF THE
NAGAOKA
FAMILY....!!



WE...WE
SHOULDN'T
DO THIS,
MIKIO-
SAMA!



YOU
GREW UP
WATCHING
YOUR
FATHER
LIVE BY
SERVING
MINE!

YOU ARE OF
A SAMURAI
FAMILY! A
POOR FAMILY
THAT SERVED
THE NAGAOKA
FOR 300
YEARS!!!



...IS MY
FAMILY
SUDDENLY
NOTHING
TO
YOURS?!

BUT
SINCE THE
REVOLUTION,
NOW THAT
THERE
ARE NO
SAMURAI...



AND SINCE
WHEN DO
YOU MATTER
ENOUGH TO
GIVE ME
OPINIONS?!



*"HARD WAY," AS IN MURDER DURING THE COMMISSION OF A BURGLARY!





HEH,
THAT'S
A GOOD
GIRL.

...DON'T
WORRY.
WE WON'T
GET
CAUGHT.

HENH



.....



ARE YOU
STUPID?!



WHO
IS
IT?!



IT'S BEEN
THE MEIJI ERA
FOR 10 YEARS!
THERE ARE NO
"SAMURAI DEBTS"
ANYMORE!

WHA...



Rurouni Kenshin

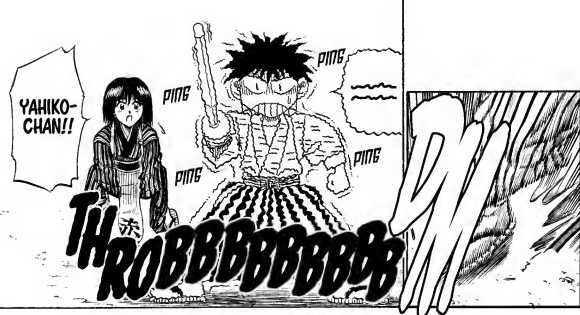


Act 32

Bonus Story: Yahiko's Battle (2)



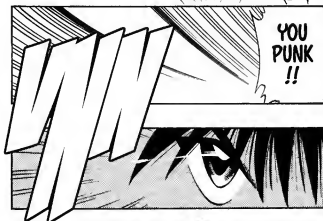






OR ELSE
I, MYŌJIN
YAHIKO,
TOKYO
SAMURAI,
WILL STAND
BEFORE
YOU!!

DROP
THIS
STUPID
"BURGLARY"
IDEA!



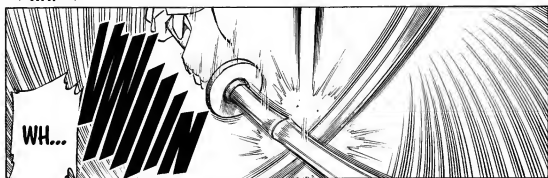
YOU
PUNK
!!



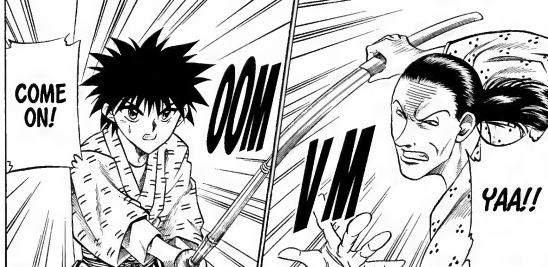
!?



OH,
SHUT
UP...















JUST
KEEP ON
DOING
WHAT I
TELL
YOU.

HENH



HYAHAAH!

...YAHIKO-
CHAN.

HEE
HEE
HEE

BE
SEEN'
YA...



I'M SO
SORRY...



IT'S MY
FAULT
YOU'RE
IN THIS...

I'M
SORRY...





THIS
IS MY
BATTLE!!

AND I CAN'T
DEPEND ON
KENSIN AND
THE OTHERS.
BESIDES, THEY
AREN'T WORTH
KENSIN'S TIME.

I CAN'T TELL
THE POLICE,
'CAUSE THEN
SHE'LL END
UP AN
ACCOMPLICE.



NEXT
MORNING
...

CHEE
CHEE
CHEE

WELL...

I
GUESS
THIS IS
GOOD
ENOUGH.



I DESIGNED
THIS MYSELF,
SO THAT I CAN
FIGHT MULTIPLE
OPPONENTS
AT ONCE!

IT'S AN
AUTOMATIC
TRAINING
MACHINE!



《 READ
THIS
WAY 》

STUPID
!!

WHAT
KIND OF
TOY IS
THAT?



WHAT
DID
YOU
SAY
!?!

HOW
DUMB.

AND
USELESS!



JUST
LIKE A
KID.

COMBINATIONS,
WAVES,
ENCIRCLEMENTS.
THOSE ARE ONLY
A FEW OF THE
TRICKS THEY'LL
PULL.

THINK
ABOUT
IT.
THOSE
BOARDS
ONLY MOVE IN
CERTAIN WAYS,
BUT SWORDSMEN
STRIKE ALL OVER
THE PLACE.



NN...

AND IT'LL
TAKE YOU TOO
LONG TO
IMPROVE
YOURSELF
ANYWAY.



**SOMETHING
I CAN
DO IN A
DAY,
OKAY?!**

YOU'RE
NOT EVEN
LISTENING.

FWAF

THIS
ONE WON'T
TEACH HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYU.

SATSUJIN-
KEN'S NO
GOOD
EITHER.

...IS
THAT
SO?

I
JUST
WANT
TO KNOW.

NOTHING
LIKE
THAT.

!

YOU'RE NOT
IN...SOME
KIND OF
SITUATION.
ARE YOU?

**RUN
?**

WELL,
TO BE
EXACT, THEY
PRETENDED
TO RUN.

IT'S A METHOD
USED BY THE
ISHIN SHISHI DURING
THE BAKUMATSU,
WHEN THEY
WERE SEVERELY
OUTNUMBERED.
FIRST, THEY'D
RUN...

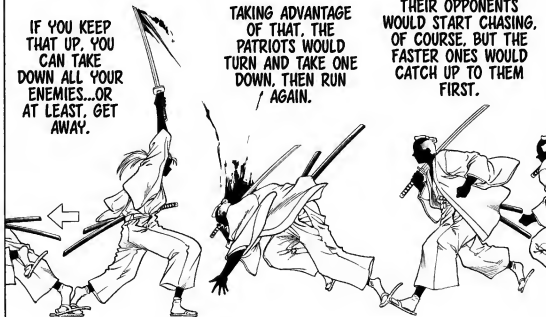
YEAH?!

I DO
HAVE ONE
SUGGESTION.

IF YOU KEEP
THAT UP, YOU
CAN TAKE
DOWN ALL YOUR
ENEMIES...OR
AT LEAST, GET
AWAY.

TAKING ADVANTAGE
OF THAT, THE
PATRIOTS WOULD
TURN AND TAKE ONE
DOWN, THEN RUN
/ AGAIN.

THEIR OPPONENTS
WOULD START CHASING,
OF COURSE, BUT THE
FASTER ONES WOULD
CATCH UP TO THEM
FIRST.



OH,
YEAH...

TEH

OF COURSE,
THAT MEANS
BEING A FAST
RUNNER...



I
SEE!!

PIPI

AND
YAHIKO.

HUH
?

A
SITUATION
...

...TO
FIGHT
ONE-ON-
ONE.

THAT'S
WHAT YOU
NEED TO
THINK
ABOUT.

THE POINT IS, NO
MATTER HOW
MANY YOUR
OPPONENTS, YOU
HAVE TO CREATE
A SITUATION
WHERE IT'S ONE-
ON-ONE.





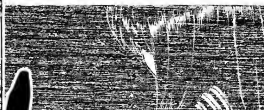


I CARRY
THE FATE
OF THE
ONE I AM
PROTECTING.

ON MY
SWORD...

...IS
NOT AN
OPTION.

DEFEAT...



I,
MYOJIN
YAHIKO...

HSS

KAMIYA
KASSHIN-
RYU...



Rurouni Kenshin



Act 33

**Bonus Story:
Yahiko's Battle (3)**

**AKABEKO,
OWNER'S
HOUSE.**

**ALL
RIGHT,
LET'S
GO!**

EH?

**YOU
GETTING
SCARED
NOW?**

**WE REALLY
GOING TO
DO THIS,
MIKIO-SAN?**

JINGLE

**WE'VE
EVEN GOT
A KEY,
THANKS
TO THAT
STUPID
GIRL...**

**DON'T
WORRY,
WE WON'T
FAIL.**

**SO
DON'T WE
DESERVE
TO TAKE
IT?**

**I TOLD
YOU. THESE
MERCHANTS
WOULDN'T HAVE
ANY MONEY IF
NOT FOR THE
SAMURAI.**

HYOOO

HENH

!

Act 33
Bonus
Story:
Yahiko's
Battle (3)



仲宏
和月

◀ READ THIS WAY ▶

PICK-POCKET SAVES THE DAY... AGAIN.

BUT IS THAT A GOOD THING?

GASP

YOU--
FROM
YESTERDAY
...!!

STEALING'S WHAT YOU DO, RIGHT?

USH

COME 'N' GET IT IF YOU WANT IT.

HYAH

GIVE IT BACK, SHRIMP!!

STOP!!

YAHIKO-
CHAN...!



Seems I'll finally have a chance to get to those fan letters. Just a little while longer, please! I haven't even had time to read the letters recently—and that's not something I'm proud of—but I do plan to make time and read them all. Reading them gives me energy, as usual; some even make me want to say to their authors, "Whoa, whoa, take it easy, huh?" (Even those letters put a smile on my face, though.)

和伸
月宏





TOO BAD
THAT WILL
MEAN
YOUR
DEATH!!



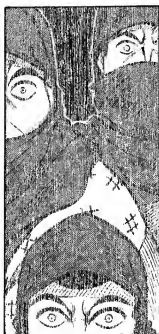
NOBODY
WILL KNOW
WE KILLED
A KID OR
TWO, NOT IF
WE BURY
THE BODIES!

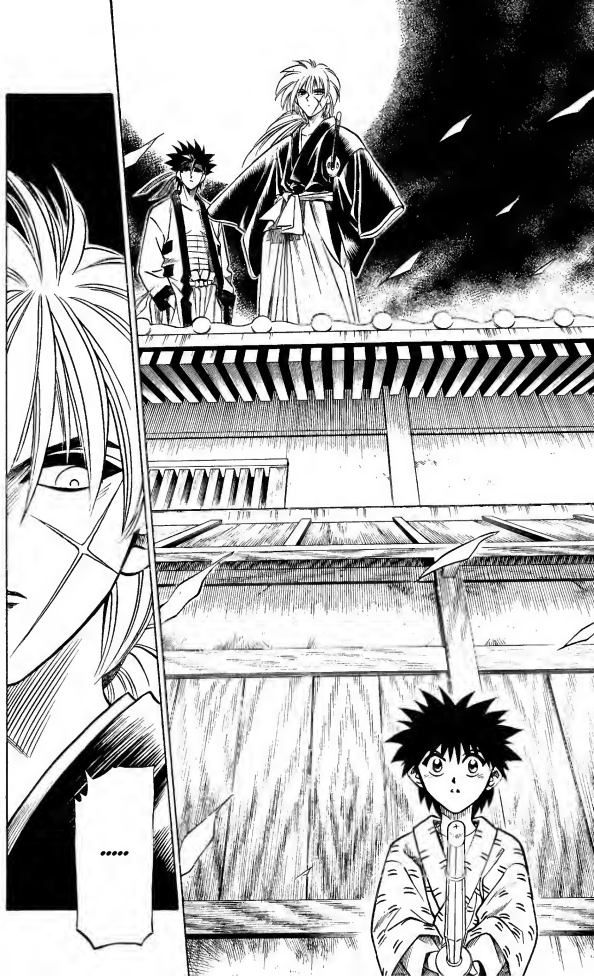
WHAT
ARE YOU
DOGS
AFRAID
OF?!

BUT
THAT'LL
KILL
HIM...

ALL
TOGETHER--
THROW YOUR
WOODEN
SWORDS!

WHO
CARES
?!







TH-THAT
CROSS-
SHAPED
SCAR
ON HIS
CHEEK!
IT'S...IT'S
HIM!

AND THE
OTHER
ONE'S
ZANZA THE
FIGHT
MERCHANT!

RUN--OR
IT'S OUR
BODIES
THEY'LL
BE
BURYING
!!

!?



YEE A-A--
AAAAAA
?!?!?

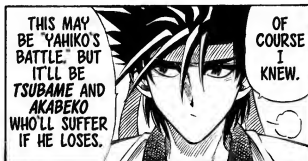


.....!



NO
ONE
ELSE
WAS
TOLD.

BUT HOW
COULD
YOU HAVE
KNOWN
THAT THIS
ONE...?



THIS MAY
BE "YAHIKO'S
BATTLE," BUT
IT'LL BE
TSUBAME AND
AKABEKO
WHO'LL SUFFER
IF HE LOSES.

OF
COURSE
I KNEW.



WHAT
ARE YOU
RUNNING
FROM?!

HEY,
WAIT!

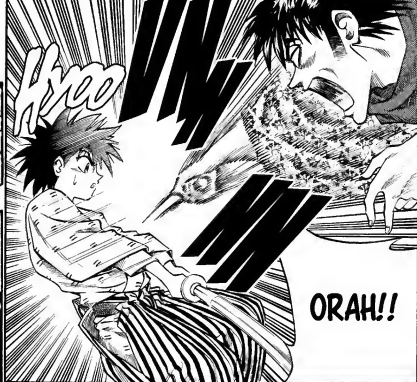
YEEE!

I'M
AFRAID
SO.

THIS IS
ABOUT
ALL WE
CAN DO
FOR NOW.



《 READ
THIS
WAY 》







IF
PEOPLE'S
HEARTS DON'T
CHANGE, NONE
OF IT MEANS
ANYTHING.

IT'S NOT
ENOUGH
FOR THE
LAW TO SAY
WE'RE ALL
EQUAL.

"FLOATING
FOOT-
DROP"!!

NOW
!!

DAMNED
URCHIN!
I'VE HAD
ENOUGH
OF THIS!!

UNH...MY
RIGHT
FOOT...

KŌGEN
ITTŌ-
RYŪ!

YES! THE
"FATE OF THE
PROTECTED"...

YOU
HAVE
TO!!

PLEASE
WIN!

WIN!!

HYOH
HHH!!

!

HE BROKE
HIS
WEAPON!

Ooo.

WHA
--?!

I...

...IT
RESTS
ON MY
SWORD
!!

CRASH

...WILL...
WIN!!





AND
YOU TWO--
ON THE
ROOF!!



KAORU!
WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
HERE?



THERE
ARE NO
CICADAS
IN
SPRING!

CRICK=CRICK
CRICKET!
CRICKET!!

WHAT
KINDA
FOOL
D'YOU...?



NEVER
KNOW WHEN
TO LEAVE
A GUY
ALONE.

FOOEY...



READ
THIS
WAY



WHEN
I'M AS
GOOD AS
KENSIN,
I WANT
TO HAVE
ONE JUST
LIKE HIM.

SO I'M
SAVING.

IT'S TO
BUY A
REVERSED-
BLADE.

AND IF YOU
TRY AND TELL
ME AFTER ALL
THIS THAT IT'S
A SECRET...



OKAY,
OKAY,
I'LL
TELL
YOU.

YAHIKO
WANTS A
SAKABATO
?!?

NOW
THAT'S
A
GOOD
ONE!

DAA
HA
HA
HA
HA!!!



THIS IS
WHY I
DIDN'T
TELL!!

DON'T
LAUGH,
BIRDHEAD!!



I'M NEVER
EVER
TELLING
HER!

I ALREADY
HEARD.
AS HE'LL
SOON LEARN.

HOO-HOO-HOO

I'M NOT
TELLING
KAORU.
THAT'S FOR
SURE!



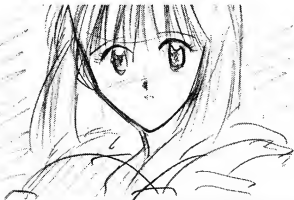
The Secret Life of Characters (15) —Sanjō Tsubame—

In terms of personality, there's no real model. Created more as a bridge to the "Raijūta" episodes, the main point of the "sidestory" in this volume was to shine the spotlight on Yahiko—"a young girl being a young man's motivation to act" the weird thought I found myself having—and thus was the story crafted to provide an opportunity for Tsubame to appear as its heroine. Some cling to their beliefs because of pride or conviction; some because they're just too weak-willed to change. Tsubame's character is testament to the wrong thinking of a previous age...that, and as a direct contrast to "acts-before-he-thinks" Yahiko.

As mentioned above, the Yahiko sidestory was meant mainly as a bridge and yet, once begun, it also raised all sorts of problems. There was the possibility that it could go longer than three episodes...the desire to focus more on Kenshin and the others...the rapid shuttling, back and forth, of the action. It was a really tiring story to tell! It was all worth it in the end, though, since the readers liked it, and even though it was short, it managed to successfully capture the world of "RuroKen." On the other hand, psychological fatigue-wise, the stress of it would drag behind me long after...

In terms of design, you could say the model came from a certain wildly popular "planet-themed" anime show—from the character symbolized by a "ringed-planet" in particular. Tsubame's just an average girl, so her hair had to be either a bowl-cut, or in pigtails. While working on a draft of a draft, I chanced to see the show and decided "Right! A bowl-cut it is!" (Why I'd say "Right!" to myself, I've no idea.)

Watsuki doesn't make a habit of watching this kind of anime, mind you, but during his period of apprenticeship, it was suggested to him by the sensei's chief assistant that he do so, and so he has, on and off, ever since. The "fire-planet" one is cool...the "ringed-planet" one is cool...straight black hair is cool...you see before you one Watsuki Nobuhiro, falling to pieces....





Act 34—The State of Meiji Swordsmanship

Act 34

The State of Meiji Swordsmanship

仲月 和宏





DON'T
EVEN
START!

HE
HAD IT
COMING.

OH!!

DMDN DMDN DMDN

IS THERE
ANY OTHER
WAY?

ALL
BEATEN UP,
AS USUAL.

See
Volume 2!

THE MASTER,
MAEKAWA-
SENSEI,
WANTS TO
MEET YOU.

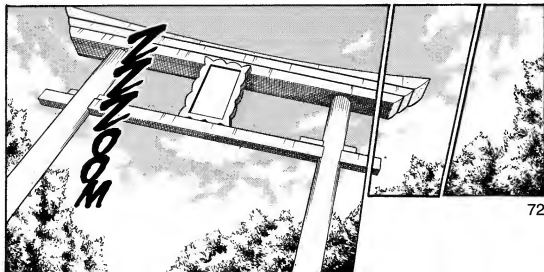
LAST
TIME YOU
WENT HOME
RIGHT
AWAY.

I KNOW!
WHY DON'T
YOU COME
TODAY?

SO
YOU'RE
HEADED
OUT?

ORO?

YUP,
TODAY'S
OUR
OUTSIDE-
TRAINING
DAY.
WE'RE
GOING
TO THE
MAEKAWA
DOJO.





THE MASTER,
MAEKAWA
MIYAUCHI, HAS BEEN
LIVING FOR NOTHING
BUT SWORDS SINCE
HE WAS A
BOY.

PROBABLY
THE BEST
SWORDSMAN
IN THE
AREA.

THE
BUSIEST ONE
IS IN THE
SOUTH OF THE
CITY, DEVOTED TO
CHUETSU-RYU--
MAEKAWA DOJO.



SURE!

ALL
RIGHT,
COME
WITH
ME.

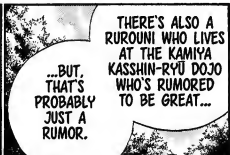


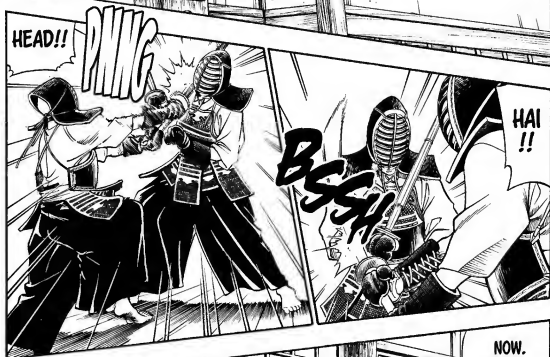
HMM...



THERE'S ALSO A
RUROUNI WHO LIVES
AT THE KAMIYA
KASSHIN-RYU DOJO
WHO'S RUMORED
TO BE GREAT...

...BUT,
THAT'S
PROBABLY
JUST A
RUMOR.







READ
THIS
WAY



LISTEN
TO KAORU-KUN.
KEEP YOUR
MINDS ON
TRAINING.

HEY! HELLO!

WE'VE BEEN
EXPECTING
YOU. PLEASE,
COME IN!

OH, DON'T
MIND US.
PLEASE
CONTINUE
WITH THE
TRAINING.

OH!

MAEKAWA-
SENSEI!



T
W
I
K

...SO, YOU MUST
BE THE KENSHIN
KAORU-KUN IS
ALWAYS TALKING
ABOUT.



THE
SENSEI WOULD
WIN, OBVIOUSLY.
HE WAS IN THE
"EDO TOP 20"
WHEN HE WAS
YOUNG.

YADA

YADA

WONDER
WHO'D
WIN...?

MAEKAWA-
SENSEI HAS
NEVER SAID
ANYTHING
LIKE THAT
TO ME...

BLAH
BLAH

BUT
WHY THEY
SAY ABOUT
THAT GUY...

WHAT...?

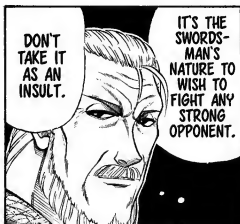
BZZ BZZ

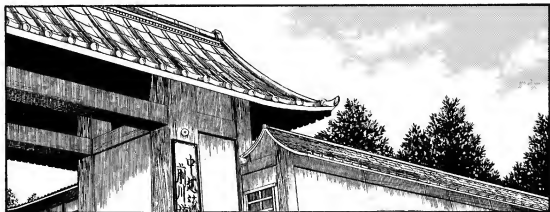
BLAH

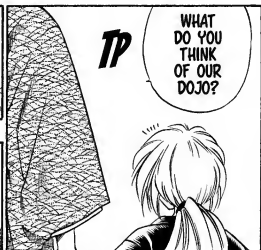
THE LOSER
WON'T GET
OFF WITHOUT
GETTING HURT.

EITHER WAY, IT'S
GONNA BE A MATCH
WHERE NEITHER CAN
HOLD BACK HIS
STRENGTH...







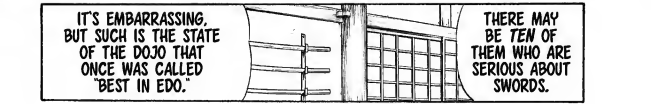




THE
NUMBER OF
STUDENTS HAS
SOARED SINCE
KAORU-KUN
STARTED
COMING TO
TRAIN
HERE.

THE
FAMOUS
"KENJUTSU
PRINCESS"
MAKES THEM
SWEAT.

IT'S
BECOME
SORT OF
ENTERTAINMENT
FOR THE
YOUNG MEN.



IT'S EMBARRASSING,
BUT SUCH IS THE STATE
OF THE DOJO THAT
ONCE WAS CALLED
"BEST IN EDO."

THERE MAY
BE TEN OF
THEM WHO ARE
SERIOUS ABOUT
SWORDS.



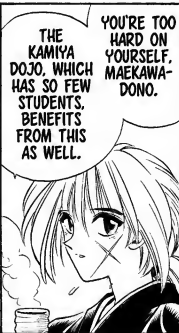
HELP
AND
BE
HELPED.

HEH...



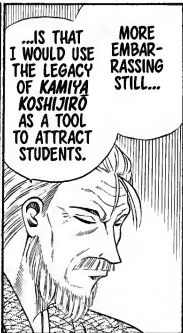
AGREED
?

...HOH



THE
KAMIYA
DOJO, WHICH
HAS SO FEW
STUDENTS,
BENEFITS
FROM THIS
AS WELL.

YOU'RE TOO
HARD ON
YOURSELF,
MAEKAWA-
DONO.



...IS THAT
I WOULD USE
THE LEGACY
OF KAMIYA
KOSHIIRO
AS A TOOL
TO ATTRACT
STUDENTS.

MORE
EMBAR-
RASSING
STILL...

THE
SEINAN
WAR
BROUGHT
REVIVAL...

SWORD-
ARTS HAVE
DECLINED SO
QUICKLY
SINCE THE
DAYS OF
MEIJI.

BUT,
SURELY,
IT
CAN'T
GO ON.

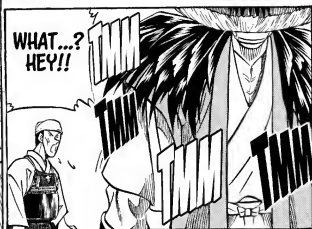
.....

STILL...
WHAT IS TO
BECOME OF
KENJUTSU?

...THERE
CAME CHAL-
LENGERS
TO THE
DOJO EACH
DAY.

HARD TO
BELIEVE
THAT,
ONCE...

!?



I
REQUEST
A MATCH
WITH YOU.



I BELIEVE
YOU ARE THE
FOUNDER OF
CHÜETSU-RYÜ,
MAEKAWA
MIYAUCHI.

I AM
ISURUGI
RAIJŪTA
!!

WHO
CARES
FOR THE
FUTURE OF
KENJUTSU,
YOU ASK...?
I DO!



ISURUGI...

...RAIJŪTA!

...A
MATCH!

I
REQUEST...

HE'S
STRONG!

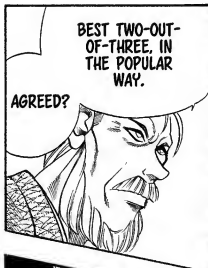
EYES TOO
MUDDY
TO SEE
THE BOTTOM,
BUT...

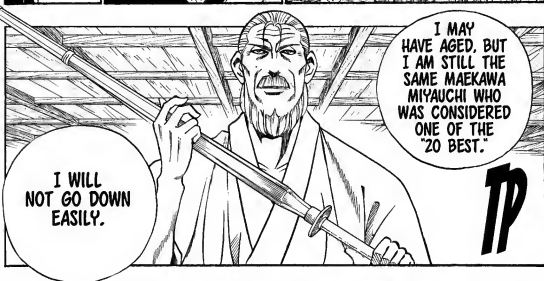
Act 35—"That Man" • Raijūta

Act 35

"That Man" • Raijūta











...TSUKAYAMA
YUTARŌ!

AND
THAT
KICK'S
GONNA
COST
YOU!

FIRST
APPRENTICE
OF RAIJUTA-
SENSEI...

If things go smoothly, the pace will start picking up in the series soon. It had been heading into a downbeat mode, which made me concerned about reader response. I know "RuroKen" ought to have an upbeat ending, so don't worry! It's been a year since the series started, so right now's the critical point. As of this volume, my own quibbles end—I'm going to start putting more "strength" into it, so please keep supporting me. I look forward to seeing you in the next volume!

和伸
月宏

UN-
FORTUNATELY,
I DON'T
OWN A
SHINAI.

YOU'LL
HAVE TO
LOAN ME
ONE.

PICK
WHICHEVER
YOU LIKE,
BUT DON'T
BLAME IT ON
THE EQUIPMENT
LATER.

QUIET.

THAT'S
ENOUGH.

HA!

GG...

THERE'LL
BE MANY
BLOWS
BUT, MOST
LIKELY, THE
LAST WILL
BE FELT
BY HIM...

...THIS WILL
BE HARD
FOR
MAEKAWA-
SENSEI
TO WIN...

I'M
KAMIYA KAORU.
I'LL JUDGE.

TO ASSURE
FAIRNESS, THE
JUDGE SHOULD
REALLY BE
FROM A
DIFFERENT
SCHOOL.



ROUND
I!



U
U
W
A
H!!

READ
THIS
WAY

I ALREADY
KNOW, EVEN
BEFORE YOU
STRIKE.

TM



WE'LL
SEE IF
THIS IS
"WORTH
THE TIME"
OR NOT.

COME.

CLARE

...ALREADY,
YOU
WERE
"NOT
WORTH
THE
TIME"!!

WHEN
YOU
SUGGESTED
A 3-ROUND
MATCH
WITH A
SHINAI...

HS
SS

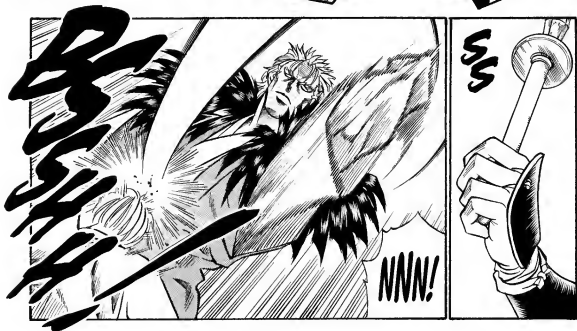
MAEKAWA-
DONO,
RUN--

NO!

!

PWIK







VALID
HEAD-
HIT. ONE
ROUND!

HE'S SO
BIG...
BUT SO
FAST...



I NEVER
SAW HIM
MAKE THE
LEAP...



SO.

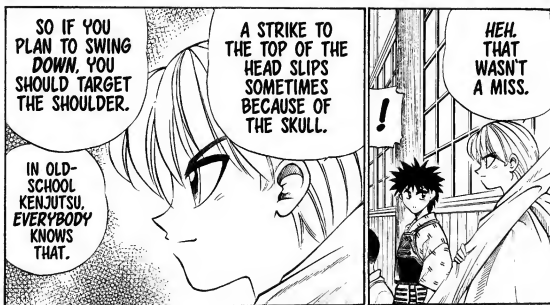
WAS
THAT HIT
NULL?

OH



THE FIRST
STRIKE WAS A
MISS...BUT THAT
DOWN SWING...

WOW...



SO IF YOU
PLAN TO SWING
DOWN, YOU
SHOULD TARGET
THE SHOULDER.

A STRIKE TO
THE TOP OF THE
HEAD SLIPS
SOMETIMES
BECAUSE OF
THE SKULL.

IN OLD-
SCHOOL
KENJUTSU,
EVERYBODY
KNOWS
THAT.

HEH.
THAT
WASN'T
A MISS.

!

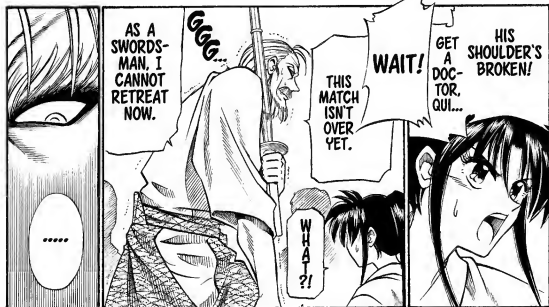


...WOULD
BE SAILING
TO THE
OTHER WORLD
BY NOW.

IF
THIS WAS
FOR REAL,
THAT OLD
GUY...

SENSEI
...

!



AS A
SWORDSMAN,
I CANNOT
RETREAT
NOW.

GUG...

THIS
MATCH
ISN'T
OVER
YET.

WAIT!

HIS
SHOULDER'S
BROKEN!
GET
A
DOC-
TOR,
QUI...

WHAT
?!

.....



HIMURA-
KUN.

BEGIN...
THE
NEXT
ROUND!

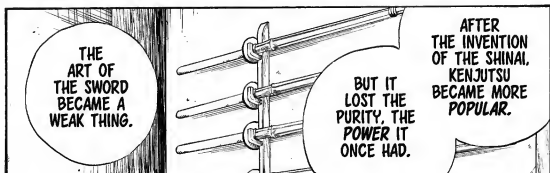
.....













Rurouni Kenshin





Act 36

Secret Sword



NO...
FOR NOW,
THIS ONE
IMPOSES UPON
KAMIYA
KASSHIN-RYU.

ARE
YOU OF
THIS
DOJO?

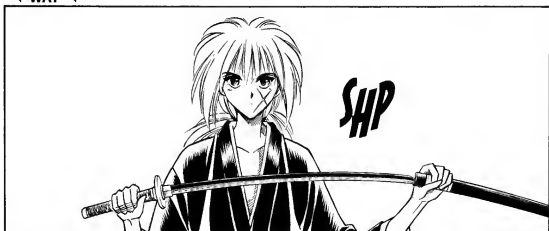


WELL, THEN,
I CHALLENGE
YOU TO A
MATCH.

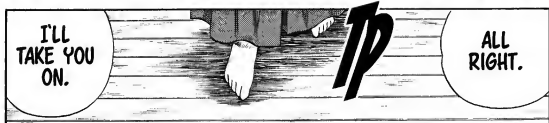
AH...SO
YOU'RE THE
RUROUNI WHO'S
RUMORED
TO BE SO
STRONG.

WITH
REAL
SWORDS.

TM









KAORU-SAN!

EVEN IF
I CAN'T BEAT
YOU, I'LL
GET IN A
BLOW.

THIS
ISN'T MY
DOJO, BUT AS
A DOJO
MASTER, I
CAN'T LET
IT PASS.

GLINT



I DON'T
HOLD
BACK...
EVEN FOR
WOMEN.

ARE
YOU
SURE?

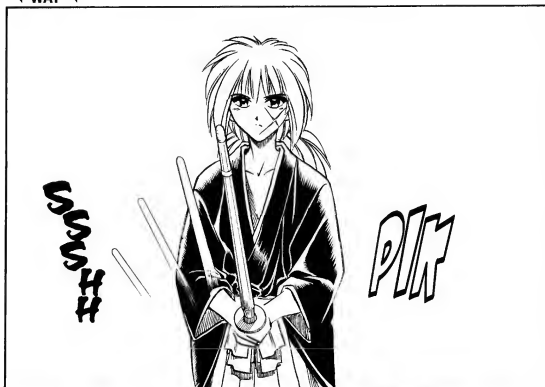


HSH









HYOO



HYOO





WAIT...

FIRST OFF, HE
WOULDN'T TAKE
THE POSITION OF
SEIGAN...HE'D
TAKE MUGYŌ.* SO
HE COULD STRIKE
EITHER LEFT
OR RIGHT...

THAT WAS NOTHING...
KENSHIN'S USUALLY
WAY FASTER THAN
THAT, AND HE
WOULDN'T MISS
OPPORTUNITIES TO
ATTACK AFTER
THOSE GIANT
SWINGS WENT BY.

*MUGYŌ: POSITION WITH THE SWORD DOWN BY ONE HAND; SEIGAN (CHŪDAN): CUT TO MIDDLE-LEVEL.



ARE YOU
TRYING TO
INSULT
ME?

WHY
DON'T YOU
STRIKE
BACK?



AND IF YOU
FIGHT TO A
DRAW, YOU
CAN STOP
MY TAKING
THE SIGN.

...I
SEE.

AS SAID,
THE SWORD
IS NOT
WIELDED TO
SHOW THIS ONE'S
STRENGTH.

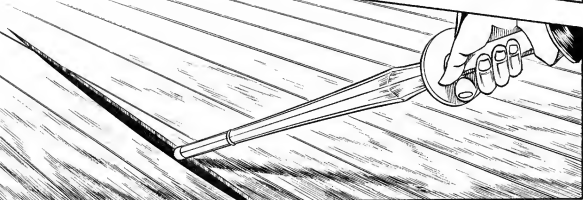
NOT
AT
ALL.



...IS
THIS?

WHAT...









FOOEY.



WHEN
THAT DAY
COMES, I'LL
BEAT YOU
BLUE, BLOODY,
AND RAW.



SENSEI?



SO...HIS
NAME IS
KENSHIN...



AND THAT
KENSHIN'S
GONNA GET
HIS, TOO!

...SNOT-
NOSED
PUNK.

SENSEI
IS
SWEATING
...

!



THAT MAN
KNOWS THE
ANCIENT
ARTS...



NO ONE'S
EVER
DODGED MY
IZUNA...MY
"SECRET
SWORD"...!

HE'S JUST
WHAT I
NEED FOR MY
SHINKO-RYŪ!

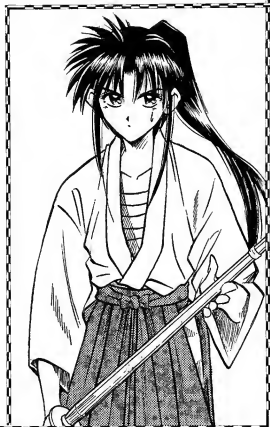
BLAH YADA BZZ WHOA

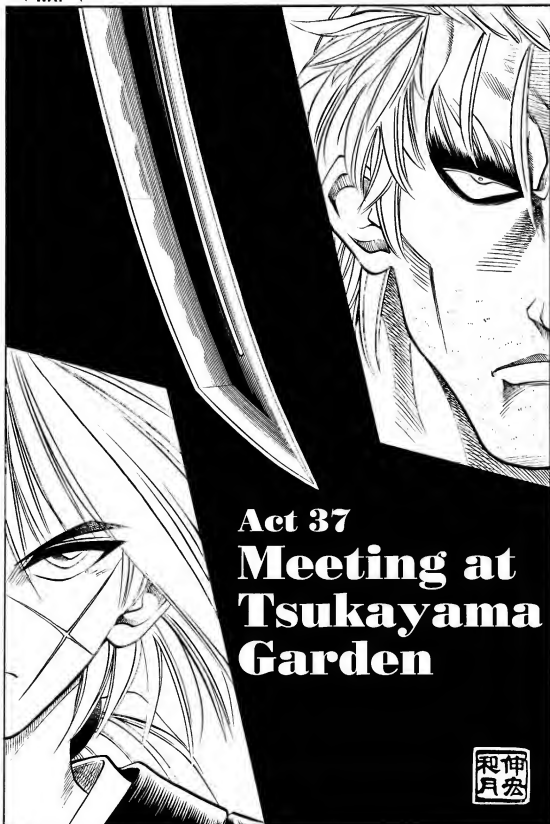
HIS
SKILL IS
INCOMPARABLE!





Rurouni Kenshin





Act 37
Meeting at
Tsukayama
Garden





INTERESTING
GUY. SORRY
I MISSED
HIM.

ISURUGI
RAIJŪTA,
HUH...?



OOPS.

I
WOULDN'T
SAY
"INTERESTING"
!!



BFF



HMMM.



SPONG



SPONG



SPONG

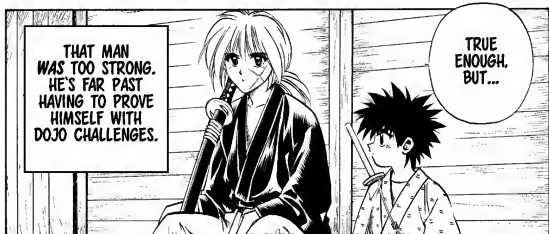
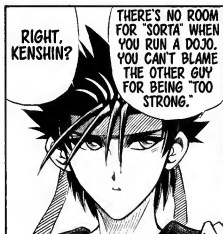


SPONG



SPONG

MAEKAWA DOJO
IS CLOSING
THEIR DOORS
BECAUSE OF
HIM!!





!



EXCUSE
ME...

...BE
AVAILABLE
NOW?



MIGHT
HIMURA
KENSHIN-
SAN...

招待状

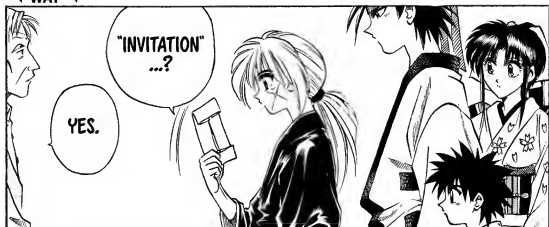
ZIP

HERE
YOU
GO!

OH,
VERY
GOOD.

THIS
ONE IS
HIMURA.



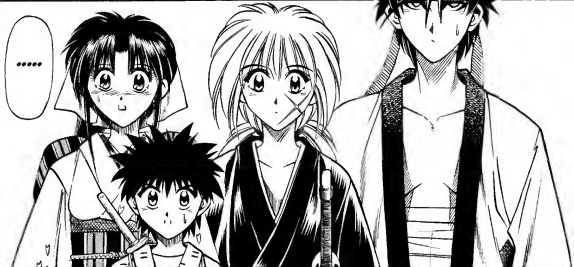




THIS
WAY,
PLEASE.

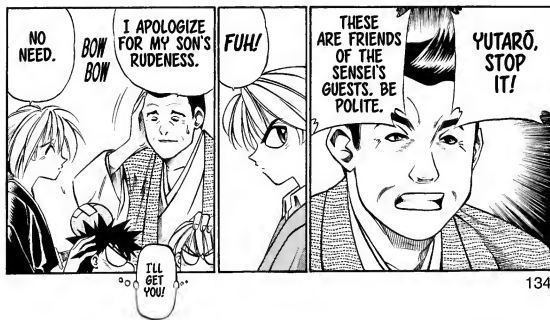


I MUST
SEE TO THE
CARRIAGE...IF YOU
GO THROUGH
THE GARDEN, YOU
WILL COME TO
THE MAIN
BUILDING.

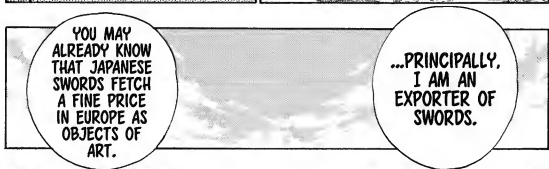
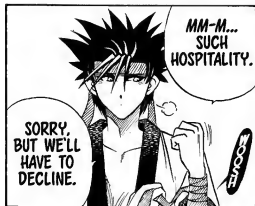


.....

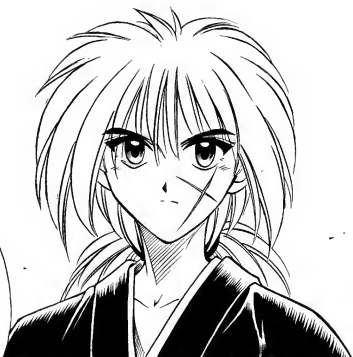




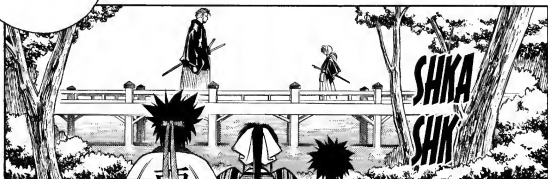
READ
THIS
WAY







PLEASE,
TAKE
YOUR
TIME...

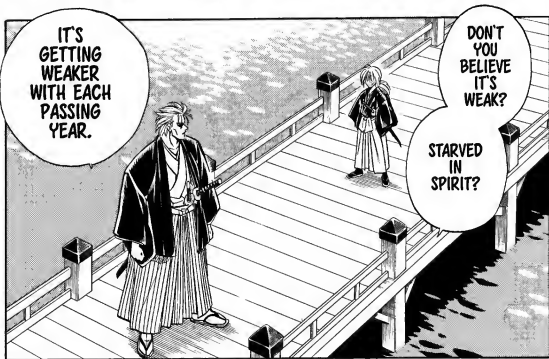
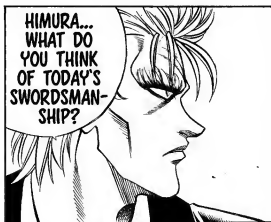


-THE
KID-

WHO
CARES
ABOUT
HIM?

UM...ARE
YOU SURE
IT WAS ALL
RIGHT TO DO
THAT TO THE
KID?

HMM, SO
THAT'S
RAIJUTA.

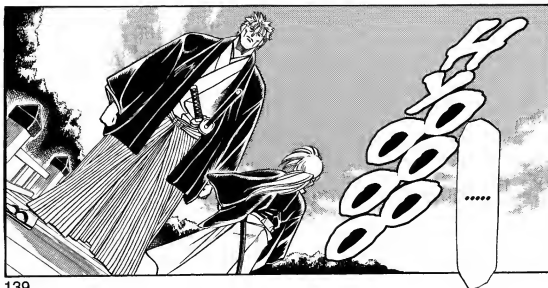


◀ READ
THIS WAY ▶



HIMURA,
WILL YOU NOT
JOIN US AND
THE "SHINKO-
RYŪ"...

AND HELP
REVIVE THE
JAPANESE
ART OF
SWORDS?







WE COULD
PUT AN END
TO ALL 500 OF
THE SCHOOLS
OF "MODERN
SWORDSMAN-
SHIP."

IF YOU
JOIN MY
COMRADES
AND ME...

"PUT AN
END"...?



WHEN THAT'S
DONE, WE REVIVE
TRUE KENJUTSU--
WITH SHINKO-RYU
SETTING ITS
STANDARDS...

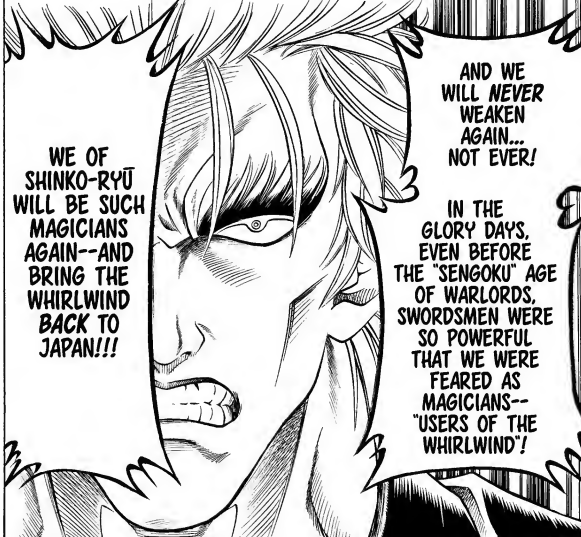


FIRST WE CRUSH
THIS "SHINAI"
FIGHTING, THE
FOUNTAINHEAD
OF MODERN
WEAKNESS!



A MINUTE
AGO YOU
WERE
TALKING
ABOUT A
REVIVAL.

IT IS A
REVIVAL!
BUT FIRST
WE HAVE TO
CLEAR OUT
THE TRASH!



WE OF
SHINKO-RYŪ
WILL BE SUCH
MAGICIANS
AGAIN--AND
BRING THE
WHIRLWIND
BACK TO
JAPAN!!!

AND WE
WILL NEVER
WEAKEN
AGAIN...
NOT EVER!

IN THE
GLORY DAYS,
EVEN BEFORE
THE "SENGOKU" AGE
OF WARLORDS,
SWORDSMEN WERE
SO POWERFUL
THAT WE WERE
FEARED AS
MAGICIANS--
"USERS OF THE
WHIRLWIND"!

...OR
EUROPEAN
FIRE-
POWER.

OUR MISSION IS
TO CREATE AN
INVULNERABLE
KENJUTSU,
UNYIELDING TO
ANY FORM OF
MARTIAL ARTS...

QUALITY,
NOT
QUANTITY.

ONLY
WITH
GREAT
FIGHTERS.

IF
SWORDFIGHTING
IS PASSED ON
ONLY TO THE
TALENTED...

...AS IS
KABUKI, IT
REALLY COULD
STAY PURE.

IT'S
EXTREME,
ALL RIGHT...
BUT HE HAS
A POINT...

WHAT
IS HE
THINK-
ING?



OF COURSE.

ANCIENT
KENJUTSU IS A
"SATSUJIN-KEN"...
MEANT FOR
REAL WAR.

ARE YOU
AWARE OF
THAT?

BUT
KENJUTSU
IS THE ART
OF KILLING
TO BEGIN
WITH!

THIS
"SHINAI
KENJUTSU"
IS A
SHAM.



LEND
YOUR
STRENGTH
TO ME...

HIMURA.



IF YOU TRULY
THINK SO...THEN
THIS ONE AND
YOU WILL NEVER
AGREE.

!

HSS



IT'S
BEEN SAID
ALREADY
THAT KILLING
IS WHAT
THIS ONE
PROHIBITS.

YOU
ALREADY
KNOW THE
ANSWER.

DO
YOU EVEN
CARE IF
JAPANESE
KENJUTSU
DIES?

HIMURA.



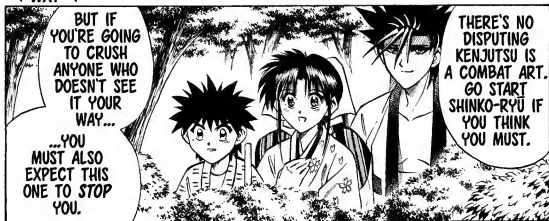
...THE
FUTURE OF
SWORDS
MUST BE
CONSIDERED.

AS A
SWORDSMAN
...

OF
COURSE.

THIS
ONE WANTS
NO PART
OF IT.

BUT IF
THE FUTURE
MEANS A
RETURN TO
WANTON
KILLING...



Rurouni Kenshin

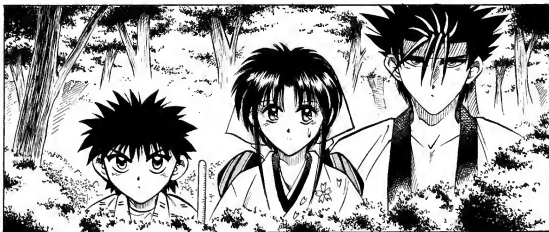


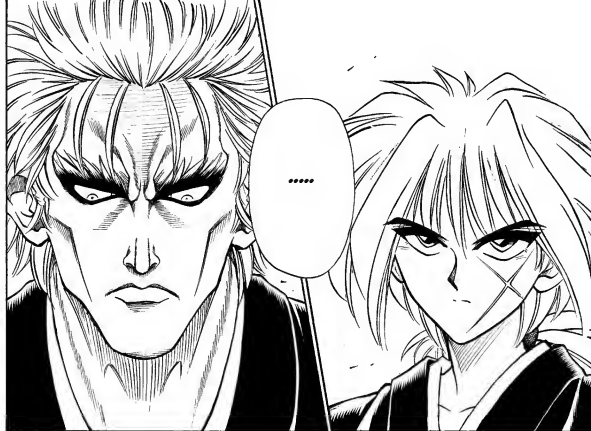


Act 38

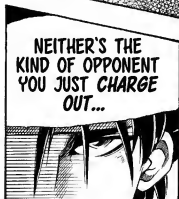
仲伸
和月

Yutarō's Skill

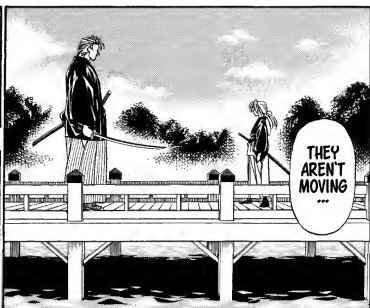




BOTH
WAITING
FOR THE
OTHER
TO MOVE
FIRST.



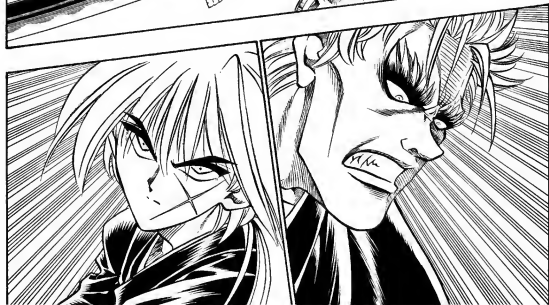
NEITHER'S THE
KIND OF OPPONENT
YOU JUST CHARGE
OUT...



THEY
AREN'T
MOVING
...







《 READ THIS WAY 》

IT IS
DRAMATIC,
ISN'T
IT?!

SO THIS IS
A MATCH
BETWEEN
TWO GREAT
SWORDS-
MEN!

SKK

OHH!!

I'LL JUST
LEAVE THE
TEA HERE.

OH...DON'T
MIND ME.
KEEP
GOING.

THOSE
ARE THE
ONLY TWO
PATHS.

YOU WILL
LEND ME
YOUR STRENGTH,
OR YOU WILL
DIE BY MY
HAND.

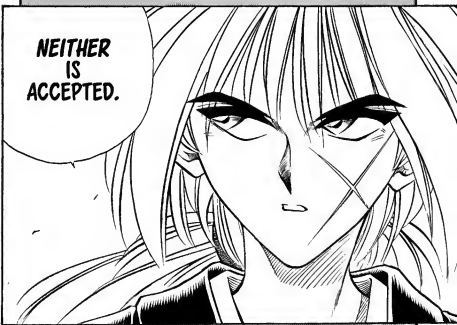
BUT
DON'T
FORGET.

THE
MOMENT'S
BEEN LOST.
WE'LL
POSTPONE
THIS.



FEH...

NEITHER
IS
ACCEPTED.



FEEL
LIKE I'M
FORGETTING
SOMETHING
...

WELL,
GUESS IT'S
OVER FOR
NOW...

YEAH,
BUT
WHAT
...?

UHM



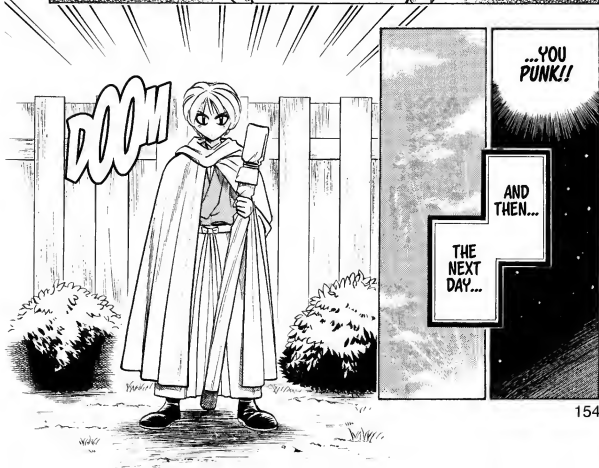
OH!



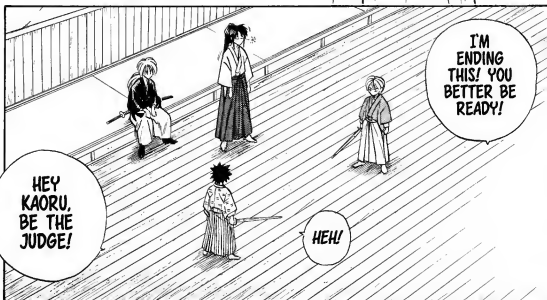


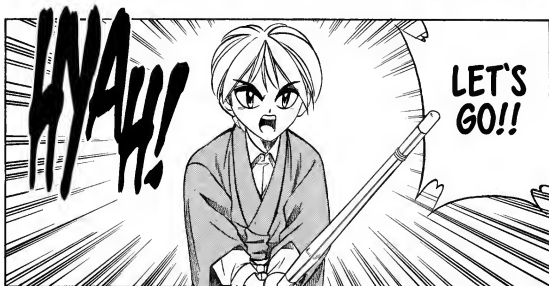
NO REMORSE

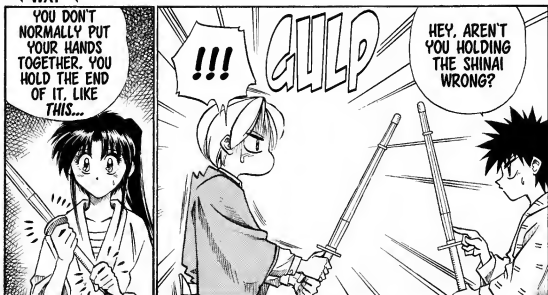


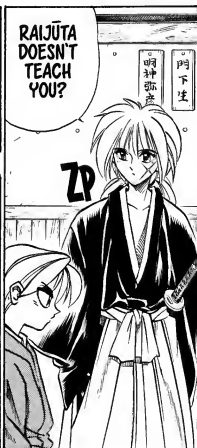


◀ READ THIS WAY ▶





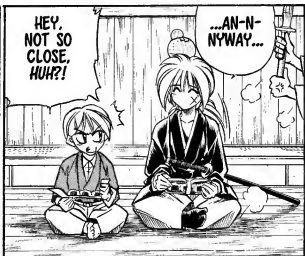
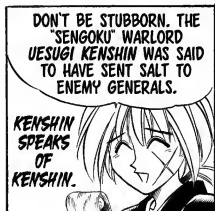










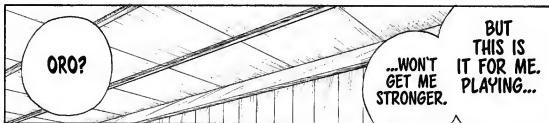




PLAY IS
SUPPOSED
TO BE FUN.
RIGHT?

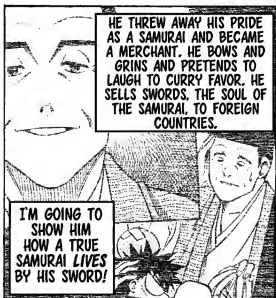


...WHAT,
SINCE
IT'S JUST
PLAY?



ORO?

BUT
THIS IS
IT FOR ME.
PLAYING...
...WON'T
GET ME
STRONGER.



HE THREW AWAY HIS PRIDE
AS A SAMURAI AND BECAME
A MERCHANT. HE BOWS AND
GRINS AND PRETENDS TO
LAUGH TO CURRY FAVOR. HE
SELLS SWORDS, THE SOUL OF
THE SAMURAI, TO FOREIGN
COUNTRIES.

I'M GOING TO
SHOW HIM
HOW A TRUE
SAMURAI LIVES
BY HIS SWORD!

YEAH.



I'M GOING TO BE
AN INVINCIBLE
SWORDSMAN LIKE
THE SENSEI, AND
SHOW MY
FATHER!



SO THE BOY HAS
PRIDE LIKE YAHIKO'S,
BUT A DIFFERENT
REASON TO FIGHT.

IS
THAT
RIGHT...?



WHY
NOT JOIN
THIS
DOJO?



BUT IF YOU
DON'T GET
TAUGHT, YOU'LL
NEVER BE
STRONGER.



JOIN
THE TRAINING
SESSIONS
WITH A PURE
WILL TO LEARN
KENJUTSU.

PUT
ASIDE YOUR
DESIRE TO
"SHOW" HIM...







Act 39
Clash





HE'S
RAIJUTA'S
APPRENTICE
!!



NN?

ARE
YOU...



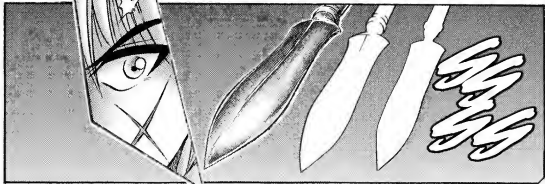


WHAT DID
YOU SAY,
SHORTY?!

IDIOT!
YOU'LL NEVER
GET ANY
STRONGER. NO
MATTER WHAT
YOU DO!



TWIK

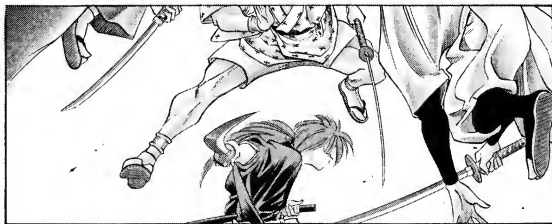


SH
SH
SH



EVERYONE--
TO THE
WALL!



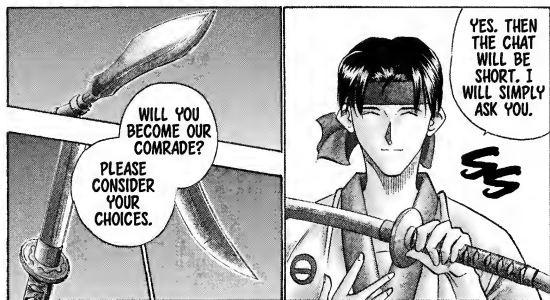




SHIN



MAN



THEN DEATH AWAITS YOU!!

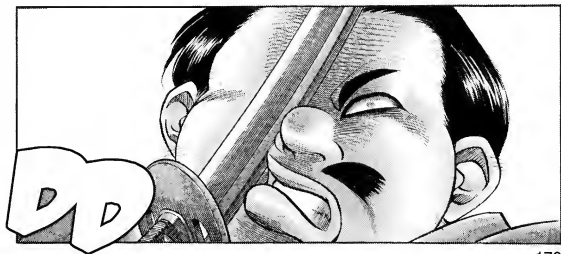
KENSHIN!!

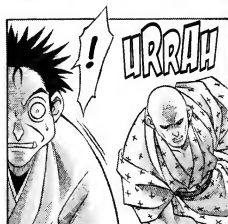
TO
THREATEN.
THEN.

I'LL
HAVE
YOUR
HEAD
!!

JAB!

!





YOU MEAN...
TWO OF
YOU.

BUT CAN YOU
TAKE THE
THREE OF US,
AT THAT
PACE?

NO WONDER
THE SENSEI
SPEAKS
HIGHLY OF
YOU.



READ
THIS
WAY

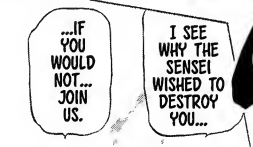


HE'S
GOOD
!!!

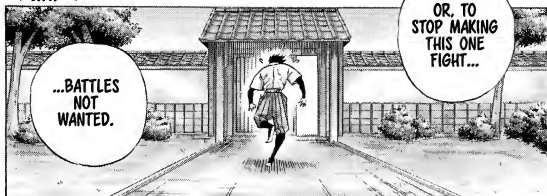
THIS
GUY...

HE
ATTACKED
FASTER THAN
KENSIN--
THERE'S NO
ROOM FOR
A COUNTER-
ATTACK!









GLOSSARY of the RESTORATION

A brief guide to select Japanese terms used in *Rurouni Kenshin*. Note that, both here and within the story itself, all names are Japanese style—i.e., last or “family” name first, with personal or “given” name following. This is both because *Kenshin* is a “period” story, as well as to decrease confusion—were we to take the example of *Kenshin*’s sakabatô and “reverse” the format of the historically established assassin-name “*Hitokiri Battôsei*,” for example, it would make little sense to then call him “*Battôsei Himura*.”

“goldfish turd”

Translated from the Japanese. A “*kingyô no fun*” is someone of little worth, a hanger-on, who profits from the skills/exploits of others by merely “trailing behind.” In this story, it’s the worst thing Yahiko can think of to call Yutarô, Raijûta’s ostensible apprentice

Himura Battôsei

Swordsman of legendary skills and former assassin (*hitokiri*) of the *Ishin Shishi*

Himura Kenshin

Kenshin’s “real” name, revealed to Kaoru only at her urging

Hiten Mitsurugi-ryû

Kenshin’s sword technique, used more for defense than offense. An “ancient style that pits one against many,” it requires exceptional speed and agility to master

hitokiri

An assassin. Famous swordsmen of the period were sometimes thus known to adopt “professional” names—*Kawakami Gensai*, for example, was also known as “Hitokiri Gensai”

Ishin Shishi

Loyalist or pro-Imperialist *patriots* who fought to restore the Emperor to his ancient seat of power

Bakumatsu

Final, chaotic days of the Tokugawa regime

-chan

Honorific. Can be used either as a diminutive (e.g., with a small child—“Little Hanako or Kentarô”), or with those who are grown, to indicate affection (“My dear...”)

Chûetsu-ryû

Sword-style founded by Maekawa Miyauchi, *Sensei* or “Master” of the Maekawa Dojo, where Kaoru sometimes visits as “guest instructor”

dojo

Martial arts training hall

-dono

Honorific. Even more respectful than *-san*; the effect in modern-day Japanese conversation would be along the lines of “Milord So-and-So.” As used by Kenshin, it indicates both respect and humility

Edo

Capital city of the *Tokugawa Bakufu*, renamed *Tokyo* (“Eastern Capital”) after the Meiji Restoration

inferior" form, intended as a way to emphasize a difference in status or rank, as well as to indicate familiarity or affection

loyalists

Those who supported the return of the Emperor to power; *Ishin Shishi*

Meiji Restoration

1853-1868; culminated in the collapse of the *Tokugawa Bakufu* and the restoration of imperial rule. So called after Emperor Meiji, whose chosen name was written with the characters for "culture and enlightenment"

onigiri

Usually filled with bits of fish or vegetable in the center, seaweed-wrapped "rice balls" have long been a (highly portable and convenient) staple of the Japanese diet

patriots

Another term for *Ishin Shishi*...and when used by Sano, not a flattering one

rurouni

Wanderer, vagabond

sakabatô

Reversed-edge sword (the dull edge on the side the sharp should be, and vice-versa); carried by Kenshin as a symbol of his resolution never to kill again

-san

Honorific. Carries the meaning of "Mr.," "Ms.," "Miss," etc., but used more extensively in Japanese than its English equivalent (note that even an enemy may be addressed as "-san")

Izuna

Described by its wielder, Raijûta, as a "secret sword," the *Izuna* will later be explained by Kenshin as a "wave of vacuum, a moving gap in the air"

Kamiya Kasshin-ryû

Sword-arts or *kenjutsu* school established by Kaoru's father, who rejected the ethics of *Satsujin-ken* for *Katsujin-ken*

katana

Traditional Japanese longsword (curved, single-edge, worn cutting-edge up) of the samurai. Used primarily for slashing; can be wielded either one- or two-handed

Katsujin-ken

"Swords that give life"; the sword-arts style developed over ten years by Kaoru's father and founding principle of *Kamiya Kasshin-ryû*

Kawakami Gensai

Real-life, historical inspiration for the character of *Himura Kenshin*

kenjutsu

The art of fencing; sword arts; kendô

Kôgen Ittô-ryû

An actual historical swordsmanship style, *Kôgen Ittô-ryû* is said to be especially "spare" and is characterized by its economy of movement, with little extraneous content. Used in this story by the bullying thief, Nagaoka Mikio

-kun

Honorific. Used in the modern day among male students, or those who grew up together, but another usage—the one you're more likely to find in *Rurouni Kenshin*—is the "superior-to-